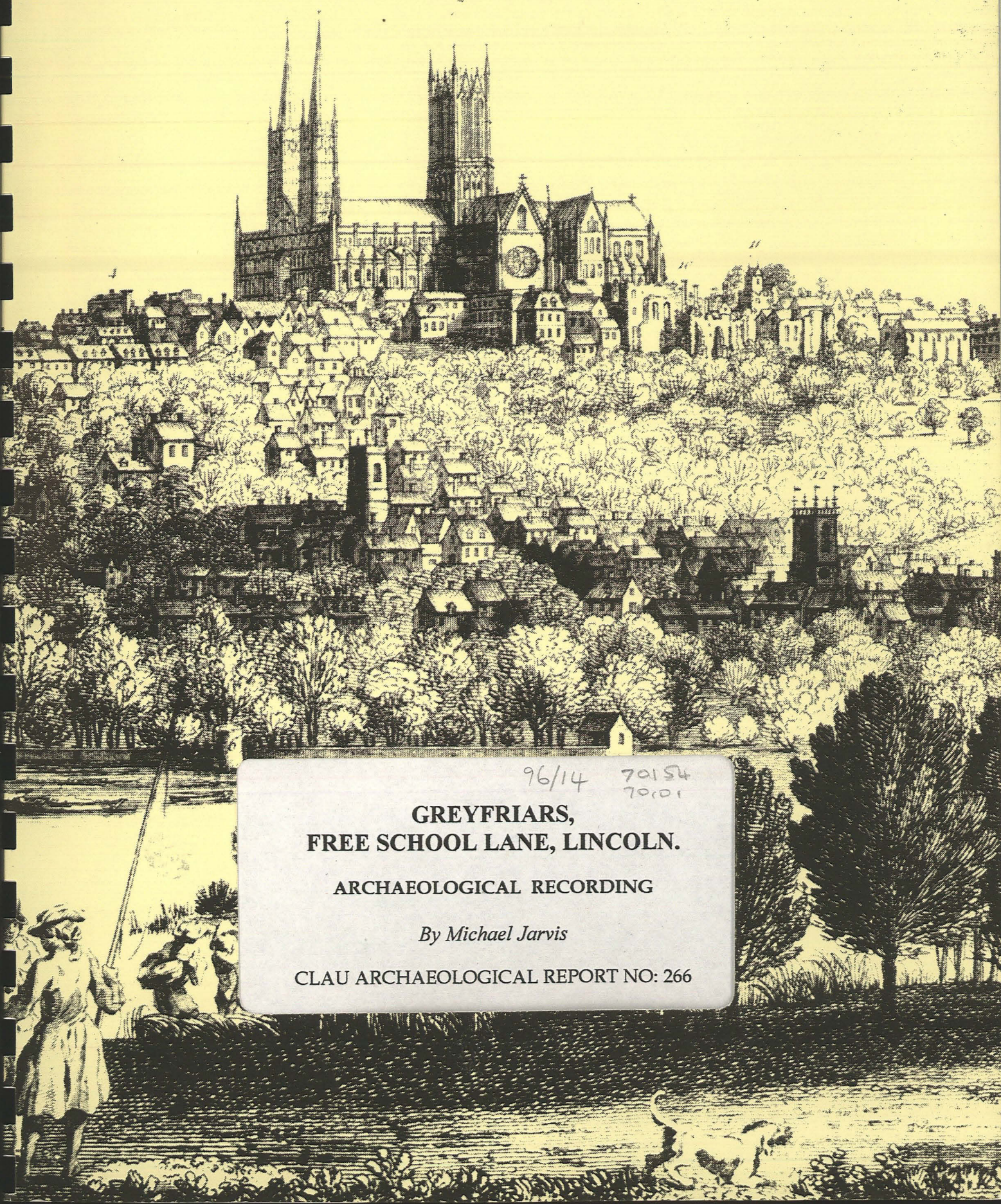


— CITY OF —  
◇ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◇  
— UNIT —



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**GREYFRIARS,  
FREE SCHOOL LANE, LINCOLN.**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING**

*By Michael Jarvis*

**CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO: 266**



ELI 6785

SLI 5755 1533

CLAU Report No. 266 Greyfriars, Free School Lane, Lincoln Archaeological Recording

**A**  
**Report to**  
**Lincolnshire County Council**

**October, 1996**

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# GREYFRIARS, FREE SCHOOL LANE LINCOLN.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

### SUMMARY

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## GREYFRIARS, FREE SCHOOL LANE, LINCOLN.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

#### SUMMARY

*Between July 1995 and May 1996, representatives from the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit undertook an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the final stages of construction of the new Lincoln Central Library. This final element was located close to and abutting the west gable of the Greyfriars (National Grid Reference SK 977 712) and was a condition of Scheduled Monuments Consent.*

*Groundwork was undertaken on the northern and western sides of Greyfriars. Work to the north involving repaving and the construction of a wheelchair access ramp, failed to reveal deposits and features pre-dating the Early-Mid 19th century. A c.17m length of the northern wall of Greyfriars was obscured by a brick ventilation wall. The remainder revealed no apparent archaeological deposits, largely because the ground disturbance was limited in scale.*

*Work on the western side of Greyfriars included both repaving and the removal of a stone arch supporting the west gable to the Greyfriars building (it was noted early in the redevelopment programme that the west wall of Greyfriars was out of vertical and cracked). The archway and a small fragment of library wall were retained in place during the redevelopment programme until a scheme whereby the west gable wall could be stabilised was designed and approved by English Heritage. The archaeological monitoring of this work revealed few previously unrecorded elements of the monument. Deposits disturbed below ground level did not, as with those recorded to the north, pre-date the E/M19th century. The removal of the stone arch, after consolidation of the gable wall, revealed some previously hidden stonework.*



# **GREYFRIARS, FREE SCHOOL LANE, LINCOLN.**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Between July 1995 and May 1996 representatives from the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (CLAU), on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), undertook the archaeological recording of groundworks associated with the final stages of construction of the new Lincoln Central Library. This work lay within c. 1.50m of the Greyfriars building and was carried out as a requirement of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC).

#### **1.1 Planning Background**

The Greyfriars Building, which dates back to the 13th century, is of national importance and is consequently protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as County Monument No.25 - Greyfriars, Broadgate.

This Act requires an application for SMC to be made prior to the commencement of any works which might affect the monument.

An application was made by Lincolnshire County Council in January of 1994 for SMC for the following purposes:

- a) to pile in close proximity to the monument;
- b) to install new drainage in close proximity to the monument;
- c) to protect the monument during the demolition of the adjacent building; and
- d) to remove recent accretions to the monument.

Consent for the above works was granted in March 1994 (SMC Ref: HSD 9/2/1857 PT7, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1994). Conditions placed on this application included the archaeological supervision of any groundworks within 1.5m of the monument.

### **2.0 SITE LOCATION**

The Greyfriars Building lies to the south of the new Central Library building and to the north of the church of St. Swithin (National Grid Reference SK 977 712).

#### **2.1 Topography & Geology**

The Greyfriars building lies at a fairly low point on the north side of the Witham Gap at Lincoln. The monument, relative to Ordnance Datum, lies c.8.9m OD, falling to the south of the site and rising to the north. The British Geological Survey's 1:50000 scale geological map for the area (sheet 114) shows the site to lie on an outcrop of Middle Lias clay and shale.

#### **2.2 Archaeological & Historical Background**

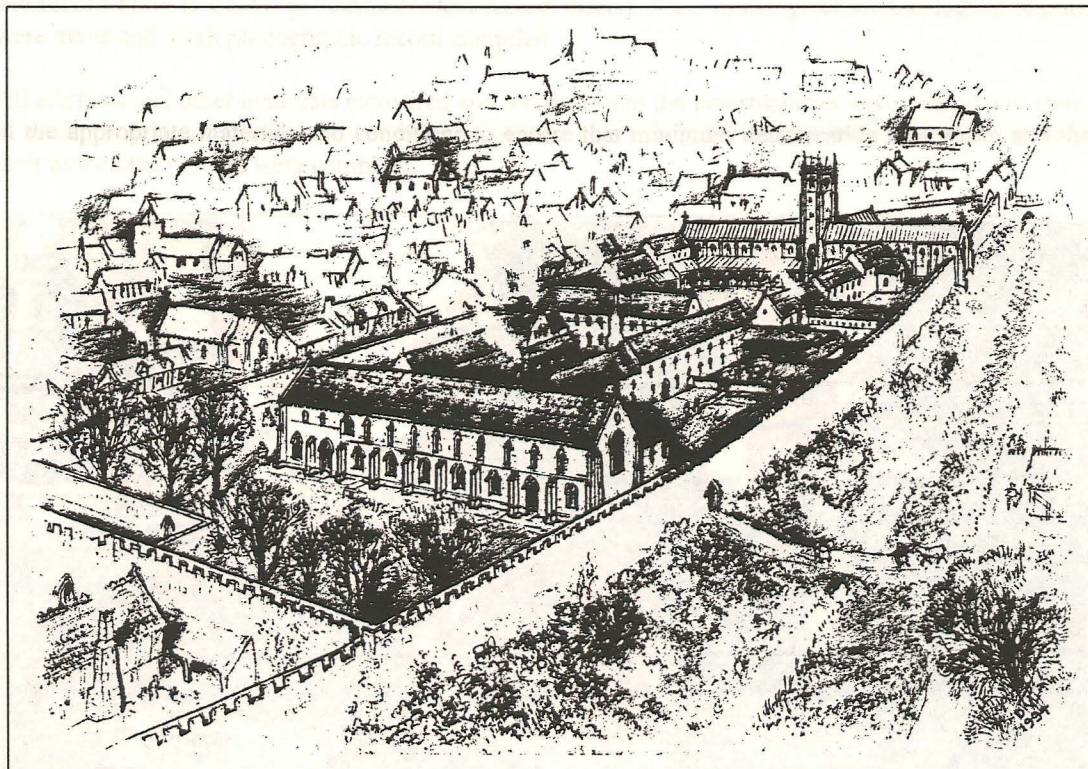
Until the archaeological evaluation of the site for the then proposed library in 1991 (CLAU Report No. 11) no other archaeological work had been carried out on, or in close proximity to the Greyfriars building (the site).



Medieval occupation in the area of the site centres around the Franciscan Friary, known to have occupied the site between 1231 to 1539. The nature of medieval settlement prior to the founding of the Friary is not known.

The Franciscans were the first of the mendicant orders to arrive in Lincoln. In 1231 William De Beningworth, the then Subdean of Lincoln Cathedral, gave the friars a plot of land to the south of the present day Silver Street. De Beningworth was thought to be a founder or early benefactor of the Franciscans in Lincoln.

In 1237 the City's Guildhall (the Greyfriars building) was, at the request of King Henry III, given to the friars. The Greyfriars building has been interpreted as the friary's infirmary (Stocker 1984), although it may have started its life as the friary church, later to become the infirmary, a guesthouse or hall (Wilford 1994). The Franciscans remained in Lincoln until 1539 when the King dissolved the friary.



*Fig. 1: A recent reconstruction of the friary by David Vale. Archaeological investigations in 1994 discovered the Cloister/garden range, Kitchen, dormitory and refectory. These lie in the centre of the picture. The areas investigated and presented in this report lie on the northern and western sides of the Greyfriars building.*

After the Dissolution the Council let the friary to William Monson, a leading and respected citizen of the city. Monson converted parts of the friary, including the Greyfriars building, into a private house (Stocker 1990). Other, later uses included a school, and from c.1907 until 1994 the Greyfriars was the home of the City and County Museum. After this date the Greyfriars was occupied by the Library Service while construction of the new Central Library was underway.

### **3.0 AIMS & METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Aims**

The aims of the watching brief were as follows:



- A. produce an archive record of deposits and remains generally within the constraints of the groundwork contractors' working methods and programme as related to the project design, with due regard to current Health and Safety legislation.
- B. to produce a report on the archaeological importance of the discoveries.
- C. to produce a project archive from which the potential for further study and academic research could be assessed.
- D. to provide information for accession to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

### **3.2 Archaeological Methodology**

The archaeological record was secured by means of trench side notes (these were transferred from the site record book to CLAU proforma context record sheets). Scale drawings of archaeological features were made and a full photographic record compiled.

All artefacts and other materials recovered and retained from the investigations were packed and stored in the appropriate materials and conditions to ensure that minimum deterioration took place and that their associated records were complete.



*Fig. 2.: Reducing ground level on the northern side of Greyfriars. The brick 'ventilation' wall lies at the base of the Greyfriars elevation (also see Fig. 5).*

### **4.0 ANALYSIS**

For the purpose of this document the analysis of information has been presented under two main headings; (a), Groundworks to the NORTH of Greyfriars, and (b), Groundworks to the WEST of the building.



### *A. North*

Groundwork along the north side of the Greyfriars building was primarily concerned with the removal and relaying of paving and included the construction of a wheel-chair access ramp in the south-east corner of the site.

Removal of material for the access ramp in the area immediately to the north of the brick extension to the Greyfriars building revealed no archaeological deposits and or features, these having been removed when the extension was constructed in c.1906.

The continuation of the groundworks further west between the western end of the brick extension and the brick toilet block, revealed little of archaeological interest. It had been hoped that this part of the works would reveal evidence whereby the relationships between those friary structures recorded during the main excavation of the site and the existing Greyfriars building, could be established.

Up to 300mm of material was removed during groundworks in this area. Immediately below the east wall of the toilet block, further remains of one of the previously recorded friary walls was uncovered (CLAU Rep.:173, p20, Period V, Structure 13). This structure, interpreted as the dormitory, was noted during the 1994 excavation of the site to lie immediately below the then existing ground level. Interestingly, the east wall of the toilet block utilises the medieval dormitory wall as its foundations.

Deposits to the east of the dormitory wall were modern dumps of soil containing frequent brick rubble. An east-west brick wall was recorded cutting into these late deposits. This wall extended for c.17m, lying between the medieval wall at its western end and the brick extension to the Greyfriars at its east end. The wall consisted of a single width of 'on bed' bricks, ten courses high (c.1.0m), bonded with a light grey/brown sand mortar and lay some 200mm north of Greyfriars. A further course of bricks capped the cavity between Greyfriars and the wall.

Inspection of this feature by LCC Structural Engineers concluded that its function was probably for ventilation (Greyfriars contains a vaulted undercroft, and the cavity formed between the brick ventilation wall and the below ground stonework of Greyfriars would, in theory, reduce the risk of damp entering the lower levels of the structure).

Observations made to the remainder of the northern side of Greyfriars failed to reveal archaeological deposits pre-dating the E/M19th century.

### *B. West*

Groundworks to the west of the Greyfriars, as with those to the north, were centred around the reduction of ground level prior to the re-laying of paving.

In 1995 it was noted that the west gable wall to Greyfriars was out of vertical and cracked. Macarthy Hughes International (MHI) was commissioned by Land and Buildings Consultancy of Lincolnshire County Council to carry out the inspection and investigation of the west gable end of the Greyfriars building (MHI Report No.1916, Sept. 1995). As a result of the possible instability to the Greyfriars building a buttressing arch and small section of the original library structure was left in position to provide some support to the west gable wall. This was removed immediately prior to the relaying of paving on the western side of the monument.

Removal of the archway and the reduction of ground level by c.300mm, disturbed no archaeological deposits (observations made in this area during the main phase of excavation works concluded that deposits relating to friary occupation had been removed to a depth of c.1.50m during the construction of the now demolished library buildings).

Previously unrecorded stonework was uncovered during the removal of the arch, both at ground level and in the area of the gable wall previously hidden behind the arch abutments (see fig. 6).



No further deposits and features were uncovered during the SMC occasioned groundworks.

### 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Observations made within 1.50m of the monument failed to reveal archaeological deposits and features earlier than E/M 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was, however, expected. The presence of the ventilation wall along the northern part of the building had removed all evidence which may have established the relationships between those structures identified during the main 1994 excavation of the site and the Greyfriars building itself. The medieval wall that was recorded could not, given the limited exposure of important remains, shed light on to its relationship with Greyfriars.



*Fig. 3: View looking east showing west gable after the removal of the archway abutment (also see Fig. 6).*

Similarly, with the results from observations made on the west side of the monument, the limited impact of groundworks and the substantial amount of previous destruction to deposits, meant no previously unknown archaeological deposits and features apart from the newly exposed stonework associated with the removal of the abutting arch.

In conclusion, the potential of this data to further our archaeological and historical understanding of the Greyfriars building, is restricted beyond a very basic level. The scope of groundworks and extent of earlier disturbance can be ascribed as the main reasons for this low potential.

### 6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank Lincolnshire County Council for funding the watching brief and post-field work analysis. Examination of information held in the relevant SMR was permitted by Steven Caney, County Archaeological Officer, Lincolnshire County Council. Our thanks are also extended to Lindum Construction Ltd, for their co-operation throughout the duration of the monitoring works. Thanks are also due to Malcolm Cooper (English Heritage) for his advice during the archaeological programme of work.



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### NOTE:

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. The Unit, its members and employees cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the terms of the Unit's Articles of Association, the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and *The Management of Archaeological Projects* 2 (English Heritage, 1991).



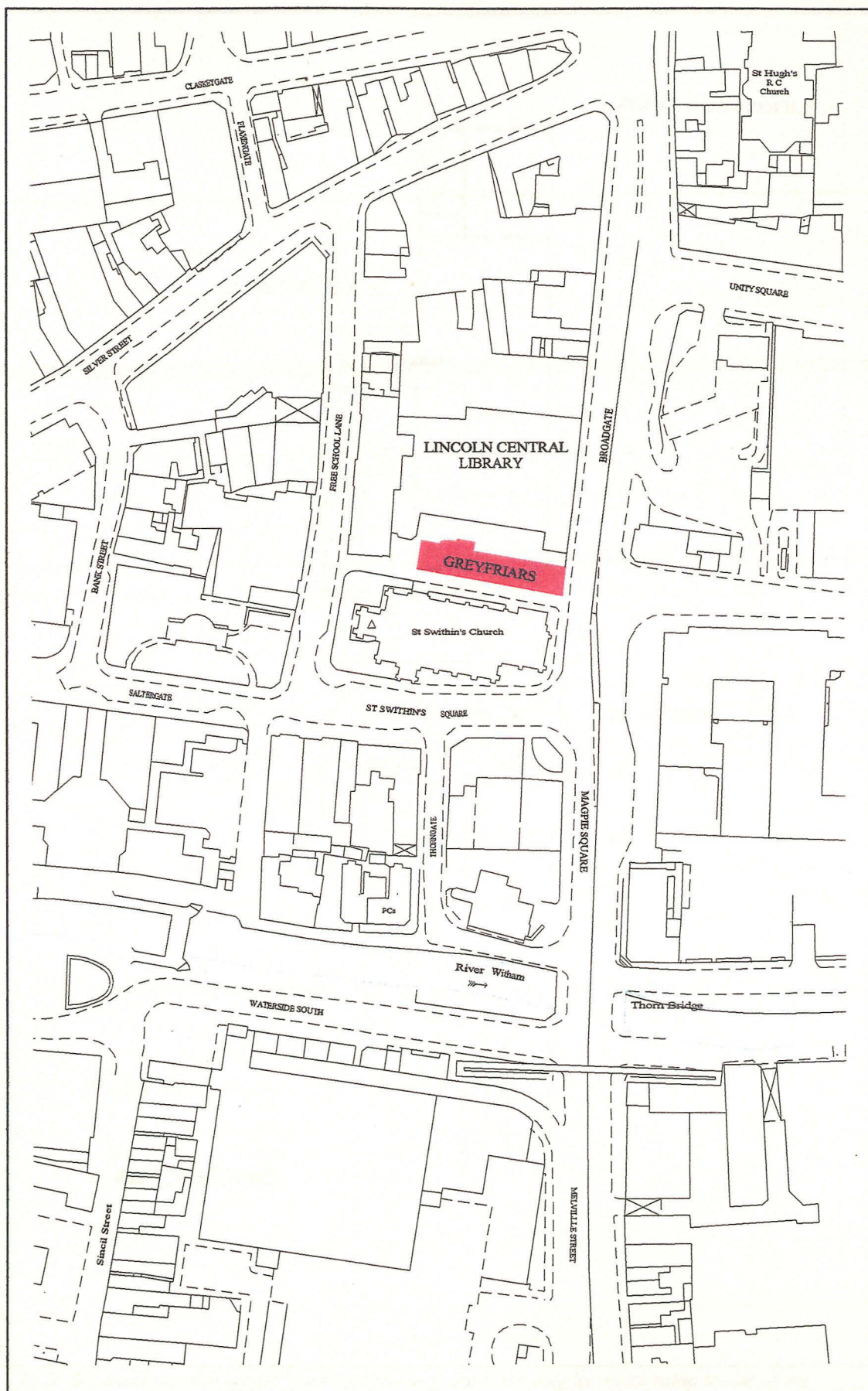


Fig. 4: General site location plan.



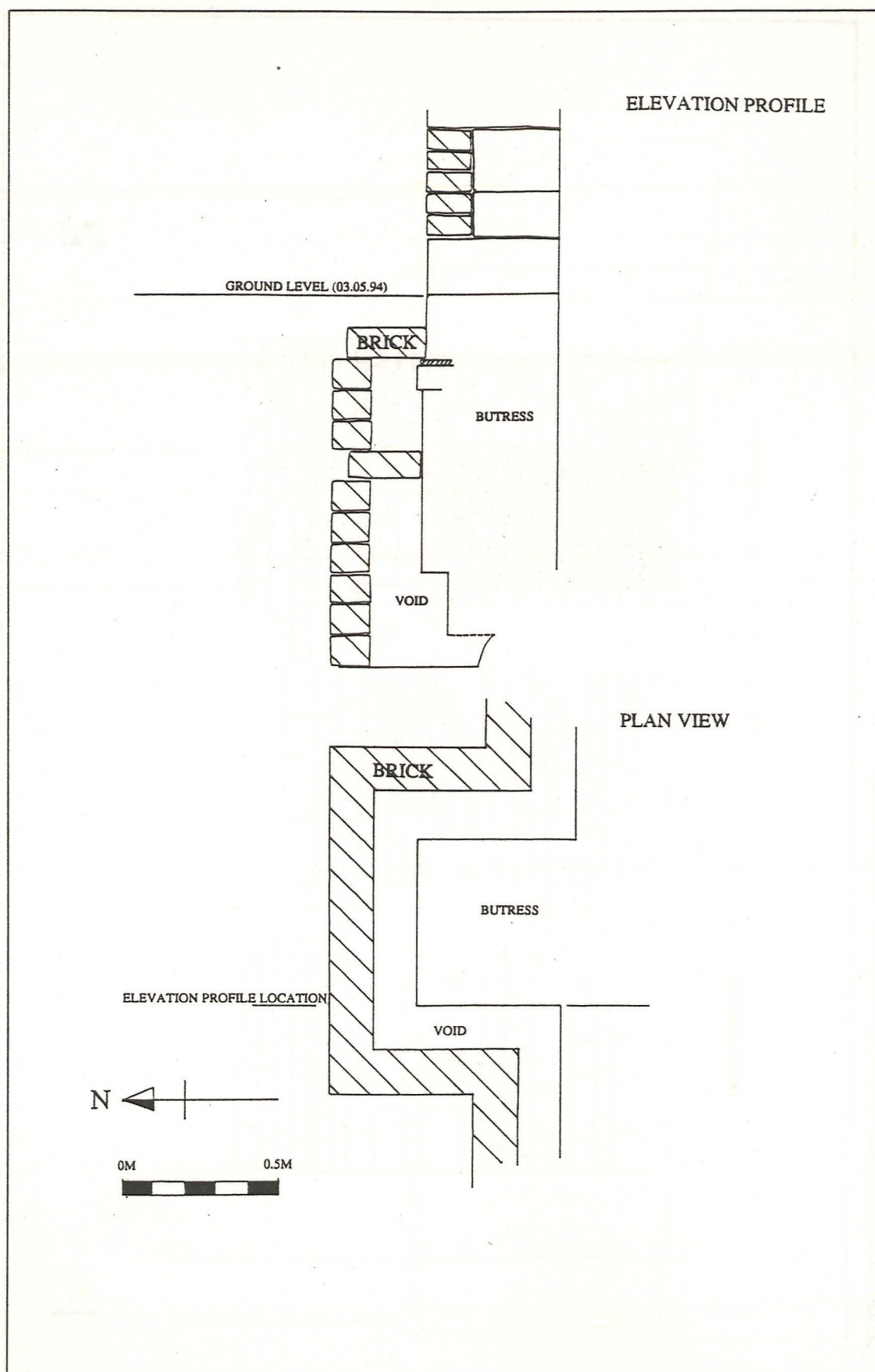


Fig. 5: Schematic section across brick ventilation feature, showing its relationship to one of the Greyfriars buttresses.



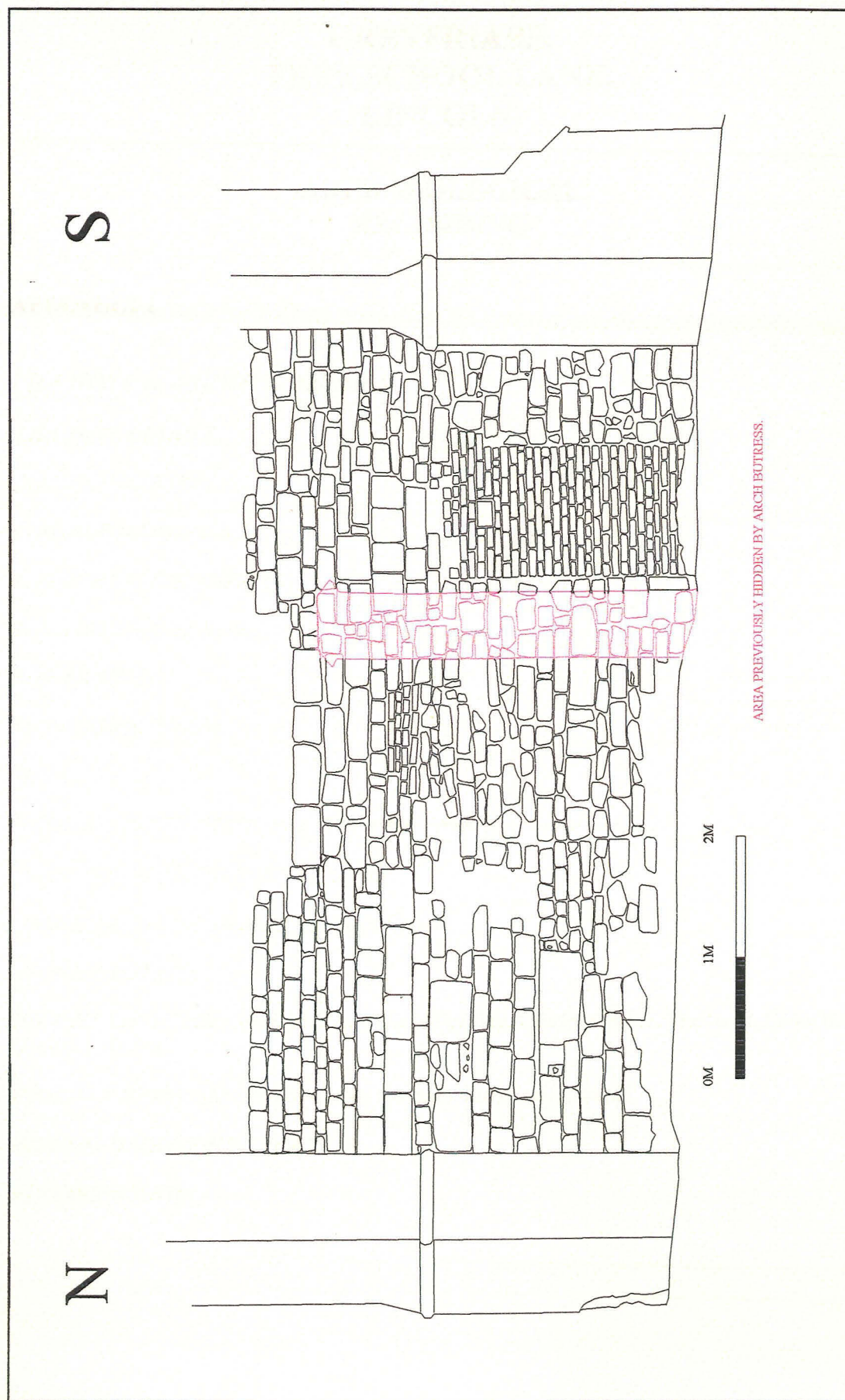


Fig. 6: Greyfriars west gable (part), showing previously unrecorded stonework.



**GREYFRIARS,  
FREE SCHOOL LANE,  
LINCOLN.**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
RECORDING**

**APPENDIX 1**

***LHA NOTE & ARCHIVE DETAILS***

***LHA NOTE DETAILS***

CLAU CODE: GLC95

CLAU REPORT No.: 266

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.:

FIELD OFFICER: M. Jarvis

NGR: SK 977 712

CIVIL PARISH: Lincoln

SMR No.: -

DATE OF INTERVENTION: July, 1995 to May, 1996

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Lincolnshire County Council

***ARCHIVE DETAILS***

PRESENT LOCATION: City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, Charlotte House, The Lawn, Union Road, Lincoln, LN1 3BL.

FINAL LOCATION: The City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln.

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: 104.95

ACCESSION DATE: -